

THE MUSICAL MAGAZINE.

NO. XII.

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MUSICAL BIOGRAPHY :—DR. BOYCE.

[FROM HOGARTH'S MUSICAL HISTORY.]

Dr. WILLIAM BOYCE, one of the greatest of English musicians, was born in London in 1710. When a boy he was a chorister of St. Paul's, and afterwards became a pupil of Dr. Greene, then organist of that cathedral. In 1736, on the death of Mr. Weldon, he was appointed one of the composers of the Chapels Royal. In 1749, at the installation of the Duke of Newcastle, as chancellor of the university of Cambridge, he set to music the Installation Ode, written by Mr. Mason, and likewise an anthem; and on this occasion he obtained the honor of a Doctor's degree. In 1755, on the death of Dr. Greene, he was appointed master of his majesty's band; and, in 1758, he was chosen as one of the organists of the Chapel Royal, in the room of Travers. In his latter years, he became afflicted with the gout, of which he died, in 1779, leaving behind him not only an exalted reputation as a musician, but the character of a most respectable and amiable man.

Dr. Boyce's cathedral music is of a very high order. The finest of his anthems were published in 1780, by his widow, under the title of "Fifteen Anthems, together with a *Te Deum* and *Jubilate*, in score, composed for the Royal Chapels." Another collection of

twelve anthems, with a short service, was published in 1790, also by the author's widow; and six of his anthems, with a *Te Deum* and *Jubilate*, are published in Dr. Arnold's collection of cathedral music. On an examination of these works, it appears evident that Dr. Boyce's style was formed by a profound study of the greatest ecclesiastical composers, not only of England, but of other countries, aided by a discriminating judgment, and a strong original genius. His harmonies, while they are full of ingenuity and learning, have the breadth and massive grandeur which distinguishes the choral works of Handel: his setting of the words is always distinct and emphatic; and his melody is pure and flowing, yet appropriate to the subject, and free from levity. Passages of divisions frequently occur in his solos; but divisions are not *always* to be censured. On the contrary, though they are no longer employed, as of old, without discrimination or meaning, yet they continue to be used by the greatest masters, as legitimate means of musical imitation and expression. It is in this way that they are used by Boyce, in whose anthems they sometimes speak the language of jubilation and joyful thanksgiving, and sometimes imitate the sounds or other phenomena of nature. Examples of the happy effect of divisions in expressing, by inarticulate sounds, the feelings of thankfulness and joy, may be found in the solo anthem, "Praise the Lord, ye servants," and in the anthem for two voices, "O sing unto the Lord a new song;" and, in the solo anthem, "The Lord is King," the raging of the sea is finely represented by the rolling divisions sung by a bass voice. Such passages as these, not being dictated by the caprice of taste and fashion, but derived from the natural principles of musical language, will never cease to be intelligible. Among Dr. Boyce's cathedral music, the anthems, "By the waters of Babylon," and "Turn thee unto me, O Lord," are remarkable for their pathetic expression. The full anthem for eight voices, "O give thanks unto the Lord," has probably never been surpassed for the wonderful command of harmonical resources which it exhibits, and the grandeur of its effect. The opening movement, for solo voices, in eight real parts, after a few bars of simple counterpoint, assumes the form of a canon in the unison on four separate subjects, carried on with great freedom and clearness, and terminated by a fugue, the subject of which is strongly marked, and treated in a style of masterly simplicity. The verse which follows, for four voices, is remarkable for the graceful and flowing melody of the

different parts ; and the Hallelujah chorus, in eight parts, intermingled with solo passages, which terminates the whole, is a stupendous effort of genius. It is impossible to listen to music like this, without feeling, that even the language of inspiration can be clothed with additional majesty, by the sublime strains of our ecclesiastical harmony.

Besides enriching the music of our church by his own compositions, Dr. Boyce conferred on it a great benefit by his invaluable collection of cathedral music, which appeared in 1760, in three volumes. This work, which had been undertaken by Greene, was completed by Boyce. It is a selection of the best productions of the English ecclesiastical composers during the two preceding centuries, and is a monument, not only of the editor's learning, research and judgment, but of his liberal spirit and zeal in the cause of his art ; for, in undergoing the labor and incurring the hazard of this great and expensive publication, he could not have been actuated by any prospect of pecuniary recompense.

Though the reputation of Dr. Boyce rests chiefly on his sacred music, yet his secular compositions have great merit. His serenata of *Solomon*, which was published in 1743, was long popular, and some parts of it are still frequently performed ; particularly the air, "Softly rise, O southern breeze," remarkable for its beautiful bassoon accompaniment ; and the duet, "Together let us range the fields ;" both of which are heard with delight by those who retain their taste for the pure and chaste English style of the last century. He composed the music of an opera entitled *The Chaplet*, which kept its place on the stage for many years ; and a number of songs, which were published in various collections. These are now little known ; but some of them, if revived, would be found elegant and agreeable novelties.

PRESENT STATE OF MUSICAL AÆSTHETICS.*

SCIENCE OF THE BEAUTIFUL IN MUSIC.

[TRANSLATED FROM THE PARIS GAZETTE MUSICALE.]

That the beautiful should be the object of a science, is a thing which yet makes many people smile with incredulity, whose super-

* This word is defined, in the *Dictionnaire Classique*, "Science of the sentiments, of the sensations ; knowledge of the beauties of a work of talent ; theory of the arts, founded on nature and taste."

ficial minds attach themselves only to appearances, and who remain strangers to the analysis of feeling and thinking. For them, the beautiful, the rude product of an imagination free from every shackle, can only be appreciated by a vague, indeterminate sentiment, which admits no other laws than those of a spontaneous pleasure, the eternal object of uncertainty and mystery.

But, for men capable of philosophy and serious studies, the beautiful may not only become the subject of scientific researches, but may constitute by itself the base of a science as positive as any other whatever.

I propose to examine the present state of this science, and to what degree of certainty it has arrived, in what concerns music. To make myself understood, it is necessary that I should take a look at its beginnings, its transformations, and its progress.

The earliest attempt to establish the beautiful in music in a scientific manner, is that which tradition attributes to Pythagoras. The foundation of the theory of the beautiful, according to this philosopher, is, that every thing in the world is derived from the relations of numbers. Now, the relations of numbers constitute harmony. From these exact relations results the beauty of proportions, and from the latter, absolute beauty.

The proportions of music, said Pythagoras, consist in the exactness of the relations of sounds. The more simple these relations are, the more harmony have the relations of the sounds : the less simplicity there is in the relations, the less agreeable are the relations of sounds to the ear. Considering then all the possible relations of sounds as embraced in the limits of the octave, he calculated all the intervals of sounds which are contained in it, and gave a numerical expression of them, which is still that of the geometers of our days. The great head of Pythagoras, attaching moreover these proportions to those of the universe, conceived the thought of a harmony of the world in which the proportions of all are identical, and maintained that the relations of the planets, of their distances, their movements, and their reciprocal action, are the same as those of music, and that these numerical proportions are found in every thing known or unknown.

This theory, adopted with enthusiasm by a certain number of the disciples of Pythagoras, spread every where, had avowed partisans during nearly twelve hundred years, and has been renewed in modern times by Kepler and others. So far as concerns the beautiful

in music, the illustrious Leibnitz has couched the whole doctrine of Pythagoras in this proposition, *Music is a secret calculation which the soul makes without its own knowledge* : that is, we judge of music only by a secret sentiment of the agreement or disagreement of sounds, which are only the results of the simplicity or the complication of their numerical relations.

Later, an experiment, or rather various experiments, in physics, having shown that a large and long cord put in vibration in a certain manner, a good bell, or other grave sonorous bodies, cause to be heard, besides the principal sound, several other weaker sounds, which, combined together, produce a perfect harmony of major third, fifth and octave. Rameau, taking this result, and combining it with the proportions of Pythagoras, formed from it a system of harmony, not taking the word in the general sense of that philosopher, but of musical harmony properly so called, traced back to it all the chords known in his time, and collected this whole theory into a book which has for its title, *Observations on our instinct for music, and on the principle of it, in which the means of knowing the one by the other enable one to render a reason with certainty for the different effects of this art*, [Paris, 1754, in 8vo.] This work is the first in France, in which it has been sought to draw the rules of the beautiful in music from positive principles. Rameau establishes in it that the beautiful necessarily resides in harmony, and that melody and rhythm are powerless alone to constitute it. "A prejudiced mind," says Rameau, "on hearing music, is never in a situation sufficiently free to judge of it. If, in his opinion, for example, he attaches the essential beauty of the art to the transitions from low to high, from soft to loud, from quick to slow, means which are made use of to vary the sounds, he will judge of the whole according to this preconception, *without reflecting upon the feebleness of these means, upon the little merit that there is in employing them, and without perceiving that they are foreign to the harmony, which is the only basis of music, and the principle of its greatest effects.*" Again, Rameau adds to these propositions : "It is to harmony alone that it belongs to move the passions ; melody draws its power only from this source, from which it directly emanates ; and as to the difference between low and high, &c., which are only superficial modifications of the melody, they add to it almost nothing, &c."

Let us stop a moment to consider how far we have been con-

ducted from Pythagoras down to Rameau, by the doctrine of the numerical relations of sounds, as the principle of the beautiful in music.

At first sight, one does not well comprehend what mere proportions, which determine only the justness of the intervals of the sounds, can produce for the beautiful in music, unless it be, not to shock the ear by false notes; but, looking more closely, one soon acquires the conviction that this exactness of proportions constitutes a system of tonality. Now, the sentiment of any tonality whatever, that is, of a certain formula of sounds in succession, being a principle which develops itself spontaneously in man, on the hearing of any music, it is conceived that the system of proportions which constitutes this tonality, ought to be the primitive principle of the beauty of the art. It is in this sense that the doctrine of Pythagoras ought to have been developed in a scientific manner by the disciples of that philosopher; but instead of fulfilling this great and beautiful mission, they have particularly attached themselves to the mysterious relations, which they supposed to exist between the proportions of music and those of every thing known or unknown in the system of the universe.

Leibnitz, epitomizing the doctrine of Pythagoras in the general terms before stated, did not develop his whole thoughts; but there is room to think that he gave to his words the most extended sense, and that he meant to say that music is a secret calculation of the relations of sounds in their succession, their simultaneousness, and their duration, which the mind makes without its own knowledge. This proposition cannot be considered as the exposition of the absolute aesthetics of music, but it indicates the nature of the operation of the understanding, when it judges of the agreement or disagreement of successions or aggregations of sounds. Indeed, the beauty of the art being the necessary result of the goodness of its relations, the mind would be unable to judge of them, if it did not incessantly make the secret calculation of these relations during the hearing of a piece of music.

In the theory of Rameau, the aesthetic principle puts itself into form in a manner more particular and more positive. There are still the proportions of the intervals of the sounds which form its basis, but these proportions are considered only in the simultaneous harmony of the sounds, presented by Rameau as the absolute *criterion* of the art, as the source of all musical pleasure, as the neces-

sary origin of melody itself. But thus contained in a part of the art, from which all the others emanate, the theory of the beautiful ought to be embraced in a general rule, which may serve at once to verify the agreement of the relations in the harmony of each chord or aggregation of sounds, and of the succession of these chords. This rule is presented by Rameau in a base formula, which he calls the *fundamental base*. Being the measure of every thing good or bad in music, (at least Rameau thought so,) the fundamental base ought to be an infallible rule. Unfortunately, it was not so; for its application caused things to be acknowledged as good, which were not so; and condemned beauties maintained by general consent.

[To be continued.]

MUSIC AND THE TEMPERANCE REFORM.

In our last number we introduced some extracts from Professor Stowe's Report to the Legislature of Ohio, shewing the advantages derived from the introduction of music into the schools in Germany, and its beneficial effects upon the children. It would be an interesting continuation of the subject, to show what effect the development and exercise of such sentiments and feelings in childhood, would have upon the same individuals, after they have grown to be men and women. Our principal object at present is, having given Professor Stowe's testimony, to follow it up by that of a man who was born and bred in Germany, on merely one point of the effect of such musical instruction upon adults.

It is well known that Professor Raumer, who occupies the chair of history in the university of Berlin in Prussia, visited England in 1835, and communicated his observations upon what fell under his notice in that country, in a series of letters to a friend at home. These letters were soon after translated and published by some of his friends in England, under the title of "*England in 1835*;" and have been republished in this country. The following extracts are taken from this work, and consist of remarks elicited by what the author actually saw of the drunkenness that prevails among the lower orders in London, particularly on the Sabbath. The reader will perceive that these remarks are not true of the British metrop-

olis only, but apply with equal force to many of the large towns on this side of the Atlantic.

The question therefore becomes an interesting one, how these evils may be avoided. Does any one, can any one, believe that it is not possible to adopt and pursue such a system of education as will secure its subjects from such degradation? Let us give a little examination to this subject. We have long been, and it is to be feared, are still, in the habit of boasting of our schools and provisions for education. Let us look a little into their character. Locke regards the human mind as made up of two great faculties, the will and the understanding; under one or the other of which he would make a general classification of all its faculties. We shall not stop here to inquire how far other metaphysicians agree with him, or whether he is right. Our object at present is merely to call the attention of our readers to the fact, that some of the faculties of the human mind are distinctly intellectual, or have direct relation to the powers of understanding; and others are of an entirely different character, and exhibit themselves under the various forms of will, volition, the affections, passions, feelings, sentiments, tastes, &c. Now which of these classes of faculties constitute man's life? or in other words, which of them is the foundation of all that he enjoys and loves, and therefore seeks? Every one sees that it is the latter class of faculties. To this class also morals and religion more particularly belong. It is then manifestly of the greatest importance that these faculties be rightly cultivated and trained; and yet what provision is made for training them in any of our systems of education? Little or none. Is it not plain that that system of education which directs the development and formation of these faculties, mainly determines what the future man is to be? Should we not feel a strong degree of confidence, that if we could have the formation and cultivation of the sentiments and tastes of an individual in early life, we should thereby at least exert a strong influence in the determination of his future character? And yet this whole business, as a matter of public education, is entirely neglected by us. Young persons are possessed of all these faculties, that is, of passions, affections, feelings, tastes, though we may neglect them; and we may rest assured, that if we do not direct their development and provide proper and wholesome food for their enjoyment, the young persons will furnish it themselves, from whatever means, good or bad, that may fall in their way.

Music affords us one means for commencing an effort towards the cultivation of these faculties ; and by the universal testimony of those who have tried it, it has always proved highly salutary. Read the statements of Professor Stowe in our last number, and the letters addressed by several teachers in this vicinity to the Boston Academy of Music. They all concur in the above opinion ; and we rejoice that the city government have had the wisdom to be influenced by it, and to introduce vocal music into the public schools. Many other changes ought to be made, and other subjects introduced, till our systems of education shall operate to the full development and proper cultivation of the whole mind.

No man of any observation can fail to see, and if he have any philanthropy, to acknowledge with heartfelt gratitude to Heaven, the many beneficial effects which have resulted from the efforts of the temperance reform. We have, however, always thought that those who were engaged in this cause were leaving half, and the most important half of their work undone. The light of a little philosophy let in upon their views of human nature, would enable them to see, that it is as necessary to furnish a man with some good object on which his tastes may expend themselves, as it is to remove from him an evil one. The expectation must be doubtful, to say the least, that a man who has once ceased to get drunk will persevere, unless it can be seen that he has other pleasures of a higher character, which may not only serve as a substitute, but are so satisfactory as to afford a reasonable prospect of becoming permanent. It is not enough to induce a man to give up his bottle ; he must have something else to take its place, for which his attachment shall be too strong to admit of his relapse. Happy are they, with whom an approving conscience shall prove to be this sufficient substitute.

We are, however, extremely deficient, as a people, in those innocent, social and domestic enjoyments, which might furnish food to the tastes and sentiments, and means for the various play of the feelings and affections. The complaints of Professor Raumer, in the following extracts, are equally, nay, more applicable to us than to the English. We recommend his remarks particularly to those who are actively engaged in the temperance reform. And we further recommend to them the consideration of this whole subject, viz., how far they can reasonably expect to effect a permanent good, by endeavoring to withdraw men from low sensual pleasures and indulgences, without furnishing them with objects for higher ; and

whether they will not more effectually benefit the cause in which they are engaged, by endeavoring to bring about such a reformation in our systems of education, that the tastes of the rising generation may be developed and confirmed in a good direction and upon good objects, rather than be neglected and allowed to form themselves upon bad ones.—But to Professor Raumer :—

" If the working people, who have generally no means of excitement or amusement at command during the week ; for whom even Sunday, stern and rigid as it is here, brings no recreation or enjoyment ; if they resort to the stimulus of beer and gin, there is an universal cry of horror. It is as far as east from west from all my tastes and opinions to justify this bestial vice : I have but indicated whence it arises, and the pressing necessity of endeavoring to detach the people from it by moral means. These means must be neither puritanical ascetism nor stoical abstinence. You must offer the poor man some substitute for intoxication ; you must make other thoughts and other feelings accessible to him ; you must not only teach him to read, but must take care that what is worth reading should be within his reach at the lowest possible price. It is true that there is a point at which intellectual culture and morality divide ; nay, sometimes appear actually opposed ; but in the last and highest development, intellectual and moral culture are similar in kind, are necessary conditions the one of the other, and converge into one.

" A singing and dancing people are certainly higher in the scale of morality than a sotting people. The national ballad and the national dance open the way to every department of poetry and of music : when people have reached this point, it is easy to awaken the feeling for every kind and degree of art. The hundreds who resort to a museum cannot at the same time be sitting in an ale-house or a gin-shop. Nor is this all : they will soon come to feel the boundless disparity that exists between men whom art raises into demi-gods, and animals in human shape degraded by drunkenness below the level of brutes. It is a radical error that Christianity forbids the education of man by the forms, the influences, the conceptions of Art : it forbids only those perversions and misapplications of Art, which the noble and the uncorrupted among the Greeks equally rejected.

" ' Dreams, impracticable dreams ! ' I hear some exclaim : ' Art can do nothing ; the catechism and the rod are the only things for educating the people, and keeping them in order.' In those good old times which some adore, the catechism and the rod were indeed the beginning and the end of all attempts to form the social existence of the lower classes. These gave the black and red characters, with which priests of a gloomy and distorted Christianity, and nobles of a haughty and ignorant aristocracy, delighted to stamp the book of social life. But genuine Christianity and

true nobility have nothing in common with them ; and the world has advanced in these respects, though it may have lost ground in some others.

“ All very fine”, say many, ‘but impossible.’ What is impossible ? Is some little elementary instruction in art, and in judgment of art, impossible ? Do not then thousands and tens of thousand of Prussian children, of Prussian soldiers, learn singing ? And does this mean nothing, or produce nothing but the impressing this or that motion on a certain quantity of air ? If the hymns of Luther, and the noblest songs of our poets, are sung by our regiments, with more refinement, feeling and intelligence, than the choruses of the *Messiah* were sung the other night in the most aristocratical concert-room in London, is this no proof of improvement ? Is this an impossible vision ? or should we wish the times back again, in which no modest girl dared to pass certain guard-houses, for fear of being shocked by obscene songs ?”

In another place, he says :—

“ I perfectly admit that the English ought to draw a sharper line of distinction, or rather contrast, between the Sabbath and the week days, than any other people. After their intense devotion to, and ceaseless occupation about, the things of this world, they need to be more strongly reminded of another, than the Germans and many other nations. * * * * The lower classes, who often have to toil wearily through every other day, find Sunday (as it is constantly described) the weariest of all. Often, after serving an austere master, they are made to see in the Father of Love an austerer still. Singing, music, dancing, and the drama, and all amusements which are addressed to our intellectual nature, are forbidden and denounced as schools of the devil. What is the consequence ? That people of temperate, regular habits, conduct themselves in a temperate and regular manner ; while a great number of the less sedate and less patient of restraint, give themselves up to the grossest sensual enjoyment, and seek in that the distinction between Sunday and working day. One set of people complain of the desecration of the Sabbath, and in this they are perfectly right ; but the only means they can devise for the remedy of the evil are still severer laws ; and in this, in my opinion, they are quite wrong. I am convinced, on the contrary, that drunkenness would decline, if music, dancing, and all the less sensual and animal recreations were allowed. These necessarily impart higher pleasures and more refined conceptions ; or, at least, tend to generate a taste and an aptitude for them. A man who enjoys singing, dancing, or the drama, cannot possibly be very drunk ; nor is brutal grossness of behavior compatible with social recreation.

“ The utter want of all musical education for the people is doubtless another effect of this way of observing the Sunday ; and where this broad foundation for the culture of any art is wanting, individuals seldom rise above mediocrity. It is only on masses susceptible of musical enjoyment,

and endowed with musical perceptions, that the lofty superstructure of art is gradually reared, and from its height, reacts on the mass whence it sprung. I utterly deny that millions of Englishmen are better Christians because they sing badly, or because they do not sing at all. A few London morning concerts, or an expensive Italian opera, have nothing to do with the musical education of a people; and just as little with pure taste, or a true perception of art."

MOZART'S OWN ACCOUNT OF HIS METHOD OF COMPOSING.

LETTER PUBLISHED IN THE HARMONICON, NOV. 1825.

" You say you should like to know my way of composing, and what method I follow in writing works of some extent. I can really say no more upon this subject than the following,—for I myself know no more about it, and cannot account for it. When I am, as it were, completely myself, entirely alone, and of good cheer,—say traveling in a carriage, or walking after a good meal, or during the night when I cannot sleep,—it is on such occasions that my ideas flow best and most abundantly. *Whence* and *how* they come, I know not, nor can I force them. Those ideas that please me, I retain in memory, and am accustomed, as I have been told, to hum them to myself. If I continue in this way, it soon occurs to me how I may turn this or that morsel to account, so as to make a good dish of it,—that is to say, agreeably to the rules of counterpoint, the peculiarities of the different instruments, &c. All this fires my soul; and, provided I am not disturbed, my subject enlarges itself, becomes methodized and defined, and the whole, though it be long, stands almost finished and complete in my mind, so that I can survey it, like a fine picture or a beautiful statue, at a glance. Nor do I hear in my imagination the parts *successively*, but I hear them, as it were, all at once. The delight this gives me I cannot express. All this inventing, this producing, takes place as it were, in a pleasing lively dream; still the actual hearing of the *tout ensemble* (whole together) is, after all, the best. What has been thus produced I do not easily forget; and this is, perhaps, the best gift I have my Divine Maker to thank for.

" When I proceed to write down my ideas, I take out of the bag

of my memory, if I may use that phrase, what has previously been collected into it in the way I have mentioned : for this reason the committing to paper is done quickly enough ; for every thing, as I said before, is already finished ; and it rarely differs on paper from what it was in my imagination. At this occupation I can, therefore, suffer myself to be disturbed ; for, whatever may be going on around me, still I write, and even talk on trifling matters. But why productions take from my hand that particular form and style which makes them *Mozartish*, and different from the works of other composers, is probably owing to the same cause which renders my nose so-and-so, large, or aquiline, or, in short, makes it *Mozart's*, and different from those of other people ; for I really do not study to aim at any originality. I should, in fact, not be able to describe in what mine consists ; though I think it quite natural, that persons who have really an individual appearance of their own, are differently organized from others, both externally and internally. Let this suffice, and never, my best friend, never trouble me again with such subjects."

NEW MUSICAL PUBLICATIONS.

The Life of Haydn, in a series of Letters written at Vienna ; followed by the Life of Mozart ; with Observations on Metastasio, and on the present state of Music in France and Italy. Translated from the French of L. A. C. Bombet. With Notes by William Gardner, Author of the 'Music of Nature.' Boston, J. H. Wilkins and R. B. Carter ; Philadelphia, Thomas, Cowperthwait & Co. 1839 : 1 vol. 12mo. pp. 389.

We are glad to see that these gentlemen have found sufficient encouragement from the sale of Gardner's *Music of Nature*, to induce them to publish the present volume. We hope the patronage of the public will be such as to encourage them to go on, and that this is but the commencement of a musical literature in this country. We shall probably return to this work at a future time. We have now only time to copy from the preface the following extract from the *Christian Examiner* for September, 1838.

"We regret that the '*Music of Nature*' does not contain all the notes of Mr. Gardner to '*The Lives of Haydn and Mozart*', translated from the

French of Bombet. Here he has shown some of his finest powers of description. May we not hope soon to see a reprint of this interesting work? It is one of the very few works in English, which treat at all worthily of the aesthetics of Music."

The Boston Anthem Book, being a Selection of Anthems, Collects, Motetts, and other Pieces; by Lowell Mason. Boston, J. H. Wilkins, and R. B. Carter, and Jenks & Palmer, &c., &c.

This book contains the following advertisement :

" This book will be found to contain a selection of Anthems, Set Pieces, &c., appropriate to the principal occasions for which music of such description is wanted. Most of the pieces are already well known and have become decidedly popular, but which, being scattered through various publications, it has been difficult to procure in sufficient numbers for the accommodation of choirs. Several new pieces, or those which have not before appeared in this country, are added, which it is believed will prove pleasing and useful."

This work is in the common singing-book form, containing 290 pages, and about 70 separate pieces. We are glad to see such a work offered to the public, and hope the day is not distant when many of the works, particularly of the first English composers, may make their appearance in this form. We are unable to give an opinion of the merits of the book, as we have done little more than turn over the leaves. A few things, however, struck us as worthy of remark. Among the pieces which have before appeared, the book contains a greater number of those which are quite ordinary, and a less number of those which have real merit, than we expected. Of the former class are the anthems by Chappel, which, whatever opinions may be entertained of them around the country, have not enough of merit to render them worth preserving.

We notice one thing, against which we must distinctly remonstrate. We perceive some pieces, whose merit as they were originally composed will not be called in question, altered and transformed in a manner which we think altogether injurious to the cause of music. One of them is Haydn's great chorus, '*The Heavens are telling*,' altered and cut up, as it has been in some books of psalm tunes, to suit the words of a very unpoetical version of the 149th Psalm. If the chorus had been inserted without alteration, or with no more than leaving out the *trios*, we should esteem the value of the book greatly increased; or if it had been a chorus out of some latin mass, or one which from any other cause could not

be made available in English without such alterations, the end might then have justified the means. But to present the public with a piece in a mutilated state, in a book the very object of which is to elevate musical taste, till the same piece in its genuine dress shall be sought after and become common, we think injures the cause rather than promotes it.

Another altered piece which we noticed, is Kent's beautiful Anthem, '*Sing O Heavens*,' the Trio of which alone is inserted, transposed to the key of *G*, and harmonized in four parts. Why not publish it as originally written, and with the Chorus, which is no unimportant part of it? If we have not the male voices in this country to sing the Alto part, as they have in England, let it be sung by females. It has a very agreeable effect, as we can testify from frequent experience, and is far better than to mutilate so fine a composition.

In some other Anthems, we notice Duetts transformed into Trios, by writing the author's instrumental base into a vocal one. These bases not being written for vocal expression, cannot but destroy the effect of what is otherwise a beautiful Duett.

The pieces by Marcello, Steffani, and some others, are made available, we presume, by adapting new words to them; and to this we do not object, as this is the only way in which we can ever expect to publish them. We doubt not that these and others of the new pieces, will be found valuable additions to our present stock; but should have been more pleased to see a few at least of the Anthems of Green, Crotch, Boyce, and the many other English masters, who have left an inexhaustible store. Mr. Mason has done much to promote the cause of music by his publications, and we hope that the success of this book may soon warrant the publication of another collection of a still higher character.

THE CONCERTS AND MUSICAL SOCIETIES.

The Boston Academy of Music gave their last concert for the season on Wednesday evening, May 29. The first part consisted of three sacred Choruses, a Soprano Song, and a Trio for three female voices: the second part was the Power of Song. These pieces have all been performed by them before, but their performance on this occasion would not suffer by a comparison with any previous one. The Song was very well sung, as

was also the Trio, which last was deservedly encored. The Solos and Quartetts in the Power of Song were sung considerably better than on the former occasion, and they were very satisfactory then.

The Handel and Haydn Society closed their season three or four weeks since. At their annual meeting, on Monday, May 27th, they elected their officers for the ensuing year, as follows:—Increase S. Withington, *President*; George Hews, *Vice President*; Abner Bourne, *Treasurer*; William Learned, *Secretary*; Mathew S. Parker, John H. Pray, George W. Edmands, John Bigelow, Benjamin C. Harris, David Tillson, Ezra Weston, Jr., Silas P. Meriam, and Isaac C. Cary, *Directors*. We take pleasure in seeing Mr. Withington at the head of this Society, and think they would have found it difficult to make a better selection from among its members.

The Musical Institute has given no concert since our last number. Their annual meeting for the choice of officers took place on Thursday, May 30, when the following gentlemen were elected:—Hon. Nahum Mitchell, *President*; John Greene, Jr., *Vice President*; Wm. H. Oakes, *Secretary*; Benj. D. Baldwin, *Treasurer*; Thomas Comer, *Musical Director*; John G. Brown, Samuel R. Blaney, Daniel R. Newhall, Anselm Lothrop, William H. Henderson, Edward W. Champney, Francis Allen, Edwin Brown, Wm. Crombie, Simon H. Hewins, Moses Whitney, Jr., Alanson Belcher, James G. Swan, Barney Corey, and George H. Child, *Trustees*.

Master St. Luke gave a concert in Charlestown on Friday evening, May 31, which was so fully attended and so well received, that he was immediately solicited to repeat it the next evening, which he did.

They have been getting up some trifles in the Opera line at the Tremont Theatre, but nothing worthy of notice. Brough is engaged there at present, and will probably sing some introduced songs in a manner worth listening to.

OBITUARY.

The latest English papers announce the death of the distinguished musician and composer, *Ferdinando Paer*. He was born at Parma, in Italy, in 1774, and wrote more than thirty operas, several of which maintain their place on the stage, and are popular. Hogarth says of them, "they have great talent, but not high genius."

From the same source we are also informed of the late decease of *Thomas Haynes Bailey*, Esq., the talented lyric poet, whose name occurs so frequently on the music upon our pianos, as the author of the words of many of our finest songs.